



# New Worlds of Adoption GROWING UP IN COMPLEX FAMILIES

At the University of Massachusetts Amherst

## Rudd Adoption Research Program

The **Rudd Adoption Research Program**, funded by the Rudd Family Foundation, is located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Psychology Department and is affiliated with the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Families. The goal of the program is to establish UMass Amherst as a leader in state-of-the-art research on the psychology of adoption through conferences, workshops, graduate and postdoctoral training opportunities, and stimulation of research activities. The program will develop synergy among scientists and practitioners from varied disciplines who share interests in the many topics relevant to adoption. Program activities will contribute to evidence-based practice in adoption and will provide research-based information to influence policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.



**Friday, February 20, 2009**  
**Marriott Courtyard Hotel, Hadley, MA**  
**8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

### **Plenary Address: Femmie Juffer, Ph.D.**

Chair for Adoption Studies at the Centre for Child and Family Studies,  
Leiden University, the Netherlands

***“Family Matters - Supporting Adoptive Families with  
an Attachment-Based Intervention”***

This conference is sponsored by the Rudd Adoption Research Program and the Center for Research on Families, Department of Psychology, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Center for Research on Families**

University of Massachusetts Amherst | 622 Tobin Hall  
413-545-3593 | [www.umass.edu/family](http://www.umass.edu/family)

Conference Schedule, Friday, Feb. 20, 2009

- 8:00-9:00 a.m.    **Registration and Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00-9:30 a.m.    **Welcome and Opening Remarks**  
**Harold Grotevant**, *Rudd Family Foundation Chair*  
**Janet Rifkin**, *Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Massachusetts Amherst*
- 9:30-11:00 a.m.    **Symposium: New Worlds of Adoption**  
This symposium will explore contemporary understandings of complex families in adoptions from foster care, infant adoptions, and international adoptions.  
  
What does it mean for adoptive and birth family members to have contact with one another in these different adoption arrangements?  
  
What are the challenges, barriers, and incentives? How do participants in the adoption conceptualize their family system?  
  
What does the research tell us, and what do we still need to learn?  
  
How would we describe best practices?  
  
What are the implications for policy?  
  
Chair: **Elsbeth Neil**, *University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK*  
  
Panelists:  
**Ruth McRoy**, *University of Texas, Austin*  
**Gretchen Miller Wrobel**, *Bethel University, Minnesota*  
**Amanda Baden**, *Montclair State University, New Jersey*
- 11:00-11:30 a.m.    **Break**
- 11:30-12:45 p.m.    **Plenary Address:**  
"Family Matters - Supporting Adoptive Families with an Attachment-Based Intervention"  
Adopted children need the support of dedicated and nurturing parents, not only to facilitate their normal development but also to help them catch up from early adversities and delays. Do adoptive families usually offer a good-enough rearing environment and do they have the strengths needed to help their children? An attachment-based intervention can support adoptive parents to attune to their children's needs in a sensitive way.  
  
**Femmie Juffer**, *Leiden University, the Netherlands*

- 12:45 -1:45 p.m.    **Lunch**
- 2:00-3:30 p.m.    **Researchers and Practitioners Panel**  
Adoption researchers and adoption practitioners (educators, therapists, case workers, policy makers) have much to learn from each other and much to share with each other, yet the opportunities for true dialogue are rare. This session will feature 3 researchers and 3 practitioners who share a common interest in complex adoptive families. They will discuss what they need to learn from one another, what they can contribute to one another, and how their pooled knowledge can be used to improve the lives of the members of adoptive kinship networks.  
  
Chair: **Barbara Fiese**, *University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign*  
  
Panelists:  
**Amanda Baden**, *Montclair State University, New Jersey*  
**Abbie Goldberg**, *Clark University, Massachusetts*  
**Martha Henry**, *University of Massachusetts Medical School*  
**Elsbeth Neil**, *University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK*  
**Chris Overtree**, *University of Massachusetts Amherst*  
**Lynn Von Korff**, *University of Minnesota*
- 3:30 p.m.    **Closing Remarks**  
**Harold Grotevant**, *University of Massachusetts Amherst*
- 3:30-4:30 p.m.    **Reception**  
Poster Session  
Book Signing